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POST-CONFERENCE

It's little they know of the Blue Ridge who did not go to Toxaway!

From the south porch of Battery Park hotel we saw the worthy peak of Pisgah, with the Rat gnawing at its base. As the crow flies it is 16 miles to its summit. Another 25 miles beyond it, straight on to the southwest, is the great Hog-Back, the tip of which has been named Toxaway—Red Bird mountain. At Toxaway's foot lies the lake, and by the lake is the Inn —and there we were.

The journey is four hours by train up the French Broad and its tributaries, the last few miles in a narrow valley which ends in a picturesque gorge. Leaving this, the train rolls out to the margin of a broad lake, and we are on the Atlantic instead of the Mississippi slope, and at Toxaway Inn, 3,000 feet above the sea.

A few years ago a company of men of means, moved by the spirit of the Blue mountains, bought 40,000 acres of land in this region.—For those who are slow in arithmetic let me say that this is about 60 square miles; and that the Biltmore tract is more than three times this area.—The mountains here are not properly built for lakes; but the industrious promoters provided the conditions nature had denied, and made three lakes of which Toxaway is the largest. It has no air of artificiality; but seems to fit the landscape to perfection.

Then the company built three inns, one on each of the lakes. Of these Toxaway is the largest, holding over 400 guests. Then they built new roads, and improved the old ones, and laid out trails, and stocked lakes and streams with fish, and patrolled the forests, and preserved the game.

The Inn is most attractive. In two great rooms, connected by a broad hall, are huge fireplaces. Here fires of four foot logs were always burning, and here our party of 70 frequently gathered; by day when it rained hard, and it did rain—and always for the long evenings.

On top of Toxaway mountain is a hunting lodge of good proportions; from the lodge's roof rises a proper chimney; upon this chimney in triumphal state and royal solitude at 5 p. m. on a certain post-conference day, sat the editor from Chicago, in her right mind—and a sun bonnet. This editorial domination of chimney, lodge and Toxaway mountain was easily the one foremost and memorable event of our Iliad of the Blue Ridge.

Mount Toxaway stands alone, and from it we learned more of all that the Blue Ridge can tell a hasty visitor than many score miles of walk and drive along its valleys could convey to us. For the facts consult Charles Egbert Craddock; for attempts to report impressions, consult her also. The mountains are abrupt, and again gently sloping; the valleys are here deep and narrow gulfs, there broad and peaceful meadows; the cloud-shadows and the sunlight chase one another across the scene and make the view now sombre, and then gay; the blues of the successive ranges are of shades most exquisite; and the most distant hills are like walls of opalescent glass. All these things are true and many others equally gracious to the eyes, are also true of the southern end of the Blue Ridge; and all are too fine in quality to bear translation into a mere librarian's words. Which confession of weakness in words brings us back at once to the editor, still ruling all her eye surveys from a chimney-top in the wilderness.

You climb Mount Toxaway on foot, unless you are feeble or lazy, and then you are drawn there by a pair of mules, or are ingloriously carried up on a horse. No mention need be made of the unimaginative ones, if there were such, who drove or went on horseback; the glory of the day and the joy of acquisition all belong-

ing to that large majority which went on foot.

A little naphtha launch took us across the lake to a landing at the foot of the mountain. A strong man, his mind set simply on achievement and with no thought of joy, can climb the two miles, with its two thousand feet of rise, to the mountain top in an hour. One of the legends of St Joseph says he did it in less; but this story was subjected, much to its detriment, to higher criticism by the sage of Baltimore. A few took their mid-day meal and umbrellas in their hands and went in the morning. Let all others do the same. The marvellously varied vegetation of the forest; the laurel bushes, which are truly trees, smothered in blooms; the huge azalias and rhododendrons, also more like trees than shrubs; the beeches, tulip trees, walnut and scores of others unfamiliar to northern eyes; the pauses by the way to rest at spots too fascinating to pass in haste; and the views through the trees of the valleys, lake and mountains as the path led upward,—all these were fully seen and properly appreciated only by the few who begun their mountain day in the morning, and did not begrudge the upward climb the three hours which are its due.

Later came the throng. For all of the party this was the Post-Conference event. And last of all came the editor, bristling with determination, but lacking wind; saying often, "How far?", but also "I will!"

She did; she was hailed as victor; she was placed on the chimney-top; and she safely returned; part of her walking and part of her carried by an angel from Wisconsin.

Other scenes, other adventures, by other persons, must also be noted.

The mountains abound in falls; leading to these falls are roads or trails. Some collected these falls much as the be-catalogued visitor collects paintings in art gallery. These only bumped over the needed miles of frightful roads, checked off the falls as they came in view and shouted, "Next." The writer has prepared a little brochure on "How not to rush 'round at a Post-Conference," which he will send on request to those who would see sights for the sight's sake. Still, there are excuses to be made for the seeing habit. At Toxaway, beautiful as is the Inn, delightful as were the great open fires, attractive as were the bowling alleys, far more beautiful still were lake, woods, and mountains; and so, in spite of much rain, "going somewhere" was the unescapable determination.

The Executive promised to catch fish for our breakfasts, but found the rains were too wet even at that altitude. An ardent Library Spirit tried to improve the literary taste of one of the local children, and was promptly told that she "Can't get that child to read any Elsie books." The zeal of the Social Settler and general uplifter was checked by the discovery that her first object was a college graduate studying forestry in the hills. The western sociologist who wanted a little moonshine whiskey to give verisimilitude to his conclusions, found that the blue-eyed native on whom he began his search was the sheriff of the region. And so joy and disappointment were mixed for us all.

Of Toxaway's waterfalls, the best are the Horse pasture, 175 feet high, abundant, and set in a glorious rocky glen. The Amazonian Jehu who drove a pair of mules, to a wagon carrying six, over the road to these falls, holds a prize for achievement second only to the editor's. Lacking both the Maryland Pathfinder and the Chicago Scientist, the party naturally lost their way. The decision to turn round and look elsewhere was reached at a point where the road was just the width of the wagon with a hill on one side much too steep to climb, and on the other too steep to slide. How that turn was made shall never be told. It was a function, a masterpiece of mechanics, and an exhibition of piloting by Jehu and of response by mules the which, if told, would mark the teller as another nature-fakir. It is not true that one of the mules helped the other to climb a tree.

Soon after this, and just as the party had learned that the proper place to turn was only a hundred yards beyond, they met the Chicago Scientist travelling by map as is his wont, and on the proper road to Horse pasture, or course. He will now understand the little feeling of discontent which led the lost ones to urge him to "drive on and ask no questions."

J. C. D.

REPORT ON GIFTS AND BEQUESTS TO AMERICAN LIBRARIES, 1906.

ARKANSAS

Fort Smith. $25,000 from Andrew Carnegie.

Little Rock. $50,000 from Andrew Carnegie.

CALIFORNIA

Santa Paula. Public library. $10,000 for a public library building from Nathan W. Blanchard on condition that $5000 more be raised.

CONNECTICUT

Darien. $5000 from Andrew Carnegie. Not accepted.

Deep River. $15,000 from Andrew Carnegie.

New Haven. Public library. $300,000 for library building from Mrs Mary B. Ives.

——Yale university library. Library of Prof. James M. Hoppin.

New London. Public library. $40,000 bequest of Mrs Henry Cecil Haven available on death of her husband and sister.

Norwalk. Public library. One of 6 bronze replicas of the Pompeiian bust of Homer, from Gen. A. Homer Byington.

Tolland. Tolland library. $10,000 by will of Ratcliffe Hicks.

GEORGIA

Atlanta. Georgia school of technology. $20,000 for library building from Andrew Carnegie.

——Carnegie library. Collection of works of southern poets made by Jennie Thornley Clarke.

Milledgeville. Georgia normal and industrial college. $15,000 from Andrew Carnegie on condition that an equal sum be raised for maintenance.

ILLINOIS

Clinton. Col. V. Warner has offered to give a site and build a $10,000 library provided the city will maintain it.

Decatur. Y. M. C. A. $23,000 from Betzner estate for library purposes.

Galena. $12,500 from citizen of the town to meet the gift of Andrew Carnegie recorded in 1905.

Genoa. $1000 for public library and reading room from Samuel Stiles.

Monmouth. Warren County library association. $40,000 for library building offered by executors of estate of late Dr Henry Tubbs on condition that the Association shall raise $10,000.

$2,086.73 by will of William P. Pressly.

Quincy. Public library. Electric lights from C. H. Fosgate, proprietor of the Newcomb hotel, wires attached to the current of electricity supplied the hotel.

INDIAN TERRITORY

South Manchester. $15,000 from Andrew Carnegie.

INDIANA

Cambridge City. Rev. Mr Caldwell of Dublin has offered to furnish funds to support a library and reading room for the benefit of young men if the Helen Hunt Club will agree to manage same.

Frankfort. $5,000 additional from Andrew Carnegie.

Kendallville. Flint and Walling, wind-mill manufacturers, will provide a mechanics' free library.

Rochester. $5,000 additional from Andrew Carnegie.

IOWA

Ames. Iowa State college. 500 volumes, the economic library of George N. Catt from Mrs Catt.